X MEN

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X-MEN™

IT HAD TO HAPPEN! THE NEW X-MEN AGAINST

MAGNETO

EARTH'S MOST POWERFUL SUPER-VILLAIN!

COCKRUM

Cyclops. Storm. Banshee. Nightcrawler. Wolverine. Colossus. Children of the atom, students of Charles Xavier, MUTANTS--feared and hated by the world they have sworn to protect. These are the STRANGEST heroes of all!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE UNCANNY X-MEN!

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THE GENTLEMAN'S NAME IS MAGNETO

STORNOWAY, IN THE OUTER HEBRIDES--FIFTY MILES OFF THE NORTHWEST COAST OF SCOTLAND. IT'S A CRISP, CLEAR MONDAY MORNING--AND RIGHT OFF THE BAT, THINGS ARE GOING WRONG WITH A VENGEANCE!...

BOAT RENTAL
ANGUS MAC WHIRTER, PROP.

YOU HEARD ME, "MICK"--YOU'RE NOT TAKIN' MY HOVER-CRAFT OUT O' THIS HARBOR AN' THAT'S FINAL!

YE CAN'T DO THIS, MACWHIRTER--WE HAVE A SIGNED AGREEMENT! YE'VE BEEN PAID--!

GUTTEN MORGEN MEIN HERREN. IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY, IS IT NOT?

DINNA ANSWER YON DEUTSCHE BEASTIE, LAD--JUST KEEP YUIR EYES FRONT AN' KEEP WALKIN' AS IF NOWT WAS HAPPENING.

B-BUT, MISTER STU'RT SIR, IT--IT'S GOT POINTY EARS AN' TEETH...

...AN' A TAIL!

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WRONG! MAH AGREEMENT IS WI' DOCTOR MOIRA MacTAGGERT O'EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY-- NOT WI' A BUNCH O' COSTUMED FREAKS!

WHAT?!?

AN' AS FOR YUIR MONEY--CONSIDER IT FORFEIT, AS PENALTY FOR TYIN' UP MAH HOVERCRAFT WITH YUIR FRAUDULENT RESERVATION!

NOW I'LL SEE THE LOT O' YOU OFF MY DOCK-- AN' BE...

...QUICK ABOUT IT.

COMRADE, SINCE YOU INTEND TO KEEP OUR MONEY, IT SEEMS ONLY FAIR THAT WE KEEP YOUR HOVERCRAFT BOAT-- NYET?

THERE'S VERY LITTLE ARGUMENT...

THAT MESS WAS OUR OWN FAULT, FER SHOWIN' UP IN COSTUME... BUT, IT CAN'T BE HELPED NOW.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS CHECKIN' OUT MOIRA'S ISLAND. SHE SOUNDED PRETTY WORRIED WHEN SHE RANG THRU FROM NEW YORK LAST NIGHT.

SEEMS SHE LEFT A LAD NAME O' JAMIE MADROX T'LOOK AFTER THINGS WHILE SHE WAS WITH THE X-MEN.

MOIRA HASN'T HEARD FROM HIM LATELY, AN' SHE'S AFRAID HE'S HAD AN ACCIDENT.

ANYWAY, THERE'S HER ISLAND, KURT WAGNER -- A LONELY PLACE FER A WOMAN, I'M THINK--

WHAT THE--?! IT'S LIT UP LIKE A SCOT'S FOURTH O' JULY--!

BANSHEE NEVER FINISHES HIS THOUGHT, FOR AT THAT INSTANT, A BOLT OF ELDRITCH FIRE LASHES OUT FROM THE ISLAND TO ENVELOP THE HOVERCRAFT--AND IN THE NEXT INSTANT...

CRIPES! THE LOUSY TUB'S COMIN' APART AT THE SEAMS!

WE'RE GOIN' INTA THE DRINK!!

SKRRR-:-ASH!!

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SOME MINUTES LATER...

IS EVERYONE--?

COLD AND WET, BANSHEE? HOW KIND OF YOU TO ASK. BUT WHY IS IT THAT EVERY TIME WE RIDE IN SOMETHING MECHANICAL, IT CRASHES!?!

DUMB LUCK, I GUESS, ELFIE.

DIDJA EVER GET THE FEELIN' THOUGH, THAT SOMEONE'S GOT IT IN FER US?

JA, WOLVERINE. THE WAY THE HOVERCRAFT EXPLODED--!

IT DIDN'T EXPLODE, NIGHTCRAWLER! EV'RYTHIN' METAL CAME ALIVE! THE SHIP LIT'RALLY TORE ITSELF T'PIECES!

AN ATTACK, THEN-- PERHAPS ANOTHER FIGHT TO THE DEATH? LIFE WAS MUCH SIMPLER-- AND SAFER-- ON THE UST-ORDYNSKI COLLECTIVE...

YET I WOULD NOT GIVE UP FRIENDS LIKE THESE FOR--

LOOK THERE, COMRADES!

IS THAT MRS. MacTAGGERT'S LABORATORY?

GLORY! I NEVER DREAMED IT'D BE THAT...BIG!

MOIRA GAVE UP ALL THIS--AN' A PROFESSORSHIP IN EDINBURGH--JUST T' BECOME THE X-MEN'S HOUSEKEEPER?!? I THOUGHT I KNEW HER. NOW I'M NOT SO SURE.

LET'S GET UP THERE, X-MEN. COLOSSUS, YE'LL TAKE THE POINT.

WITH PLEASURE, BANSHEE--AFTER OUR PLEASANT VACATION AT CASSIDY KEEP...

...IT WILL BE GOOD TO GET INTO ACTION ONCE MO--

--OOOOOOFFF!!

WHOMP!

COLOSSUS, YOU OKAY?

I AM WELL MY FRIEND. BUT WHAT--?!

A FORCE FIELD. A DOME O' SOLIDIFIED AIR PINNIN' US T' THIS BEACH.

MAKING US SITTING DUCKS.

YOU SAID IT, NIGHTCRAWLER!

THE GROUND--!!

YOU GOT THE ANSWERS, IRISH! WHAT'S GOIN' ON?!

CAN YE NOT FEEL, WOLVERINE?!

THE FORCE FIELD BUBBLE'S RIPPIN' THE BEACH--AN' US--RIGHT OUT O' THE GROUND!

SKS

HOK

AN' NOW IT'S THROWIN' US AT THE OUTER WALL O' MOIRA'S LAB!

WE'VE ONLY ONE CHANCE-- THAT'S T'HIT THAT WALL WITH ALL THE POWER WE HAVE--

--AN' HOPE THAT WE CAN PUNCH A HOLE THRU IT BEFORE THE IMPACT SMASHES US TO A PULP!

SET YOURSELVES, X-MEN!

AN' CUT LOOSE-- NOW!

WE-- WE DID IT.

ONLY JUST, NIGHTCRAWLER. IF WE'D BEEN GOIN' A BIT FASTER OR IF THESE WALLS'D BEEN A BIT THICKER--!

Y'KNOW, I'M THINKIN' THERE'S A TERRIBLY FAMILIAR PATTERN T' THESE ATTACKS BUT-- THE ONLY PERSON WI' THE POWER T' PULL 'EM OFF IS--

A LOT CLOSER THAN YOU THINK, BANSHEE!

BANSHEE! THAT DOOR-- IT'S GLOWING!

RED-HOT IN A MATTER OF SECONDS, WHITE-HOT A MINUTE AFTER THAT, THE METAL SCREAMS AS IT CRYSTALIZES AND BEGINS TO CRUMBLE...

RUN FER IT, ALL O' YE! GET T' COVER BEFORE THE DOOR--

--EXPLODES!

SHKOW!

GREETINGS, X-MEN. I BID YOU WELCOME TO THE SITE OF YOUR FINAL BATTLEGROUND.

YOU ARE GOING TO DIE HERE, MUTANTS.. AND NOT ALL YOUR POWERS NOR YOUR SKILLS CAN SAVE YOU FROM MY WRATH!

LOOK ON ME, X-MEN, FOR I AM YOUR OLDEST, DEADLIEST FOE, MASTER OF THE LEGION OF EVIL MUTANTS--AND SOON TO BE LORD OF ALL THE WORLD!

I--AM--
MAGNETO!!

WE HATE TO DO THIS, FOLKS, BUT OUT ON THE LANDING PAD BEHIND THE LAB...

...A VERY FAMILIAR AIRCRAFT (LAST OF A SET OF TWO) IS TOUCHING DOWN AFTER A RUSHED FLIGHT EAST FROM NEW YORK.

MRS. MacTAGGERT! WE'VE ARRIVED.

THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE HOVERCRAFT IN THE BAY, THOUGH; THE X-MEN ARE LATE. I ONLY HOPE THEY HAVEN'T RUN INTO TROUBLE.

YOU SOUND... ANGRY, CYCLOPS.

I AM. I'VE BEEN WITH PROFESSOR XAVIER SINCE THE BEGINNING AND THIS IS THE FIRST I'VE HEARD OF YOUR "MUTANT RESEARCH CENTER."

I'VE SEEN SECRECY BEFORE, LADY, BUT THIS--?!?

A COMPLEX DESIGNED TO CAGE THE MOST DANGEROUS MUTANTS IN EXISTENCE--

AND, PERHAPS, CURE THEIR HATRED FOR HUMANITY. IT'S MY LIFE'S WORK, SCOTT, BEGUN IN HAPPIER DAYS...

...WHEN CHARLES AND I WERE...STUDENTS TOGETHER. FOLLOW ME! THE MAIN LAB'S THROUGH HERE.

OKAY, MOIRA--I JUST HOPE NONE OF YOUR "GUESTS" HAVE BUSTED FREE...

OF COURSE, THEY HAVEN'T. CYCLOPS, LOOK!

SOMEONE'S LYING IN THE SHADOWS!

JAMIE! IT'S JAMIE MADROX!* HE'S COMING 'ROUND. EASY, LAD, TAKE IT EASY.

WHAT HAPPENED T' YOU, LAD?

*LAST SEEN IN GIANT-SIZED FF #4 --ARCHIE

M-MOIRA? OH, NO! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?! IF YOU'VE BROUGHT THE X-MEN HERE--

--YOU'VE MURDERED THEM!

"LEMME EXPLAIN... I WAS MAKING MY MORNING ROUNDS WHEN I GOT AMBUSHED BY HAVOK, POLARIS, AND ERIC THE RED.

"SOMEHOW THEY'D GOTTEN PAST ALL THE AUTOMATIC SECURITY SYSTEMS.

"THEY WENT STRAIGHT FOR THE CELL WE'VE HAD MAGNETO IN EVER SINCE HE'D BEEN TURNED INTO A BABY."*

*BACK IN DEFENDERS#16 --ARCHIE

"ERIC SOUNDED PRESSED FOR TIME, ALMOST SCARED-- HE GESTURED, SOME SORT OF RAY ZAPPING OUT FROM HIS HAND TOWARDS THE BABY...

"...AND IN SECONDS, MAGNETO WAS A GROWN MAN AGAIN!

"THEY TALKED ALL DAY, ERIC SUGGESTING AN ALLIANCE AGAINST THE X-MEN-- A TWO-PRONGED ATTACK.

"MAGNETO WAS FURIOUS-- HUMILIATED --AT BEING A BABY IN XAVIER'S HANDS. HE WANTED VENGEANCE..."

MY GOD--MAGNETO A GROWN MAN AND PROBABLY AT THE PEAK OF HIS POWERS!

MOIRA. GET JAMIE OUT TO THE JET, AND BE READY TO TAKE OFF ON A MOMENTS NOTICE!

BUT SCOTT--THE X-MEN HAVE HANDLED MAGNETO BEFORE, SURELY YOU CAN DO IT AGAIN.

THE OLD X-MEN COULD, MOIRA--BUT MAGNETO WAS A BABY WHEN THE NEW TEAM WAS FORMED!

PROFESSOR XAVIER AND I NEVER FIGURED ON FACING HIM AGAIN, SO WE NEVER TRAINED THE NEW X-MEN TO FIGHT HIM.

THEY'RE GOOD KIDS, MOIRA, BUT AGAINST MAGNETO THEY HAVEN'T A PRAYER!

DON'T TELL **THEM** THAT, CYCLOPS-- YOU MIGHT GET AN **ARGUMENT**...

HEY, IT'S THE **HEAD HONCHO** HISSELF, TROOPS-- WHAT SAY WE CUT OL' **BUCKET-HEAD** DOWN TA **SIZE!**

SUCH ALL-CONSUMING **ARROGANCE** FROM SUCH A **LITTLE MAN**, WOLVERINE? OH, YES, I **KNOW** YOUR NAME. THANKS TO **ERIC THE RED**, I KNOW **ALL ABOUT** THE NEW X-MEN!

YOU NEED A **LESSON** IN HOW TO **RESPECT** YOUR **BETTERS!**

A LESSON **MAGNETO** WILL BE HAPPY TO **TEACH YOU!**

MY **CLAWS--!**

THEY'RE **PULLIN'** ME INTA THE **WALL--**

BWHAM!

AND NOW THE **ARMORED RUSSIAN** COMES TO AVENGE HIS FRIEND. HOW **NOBLY PATHETIC.**

FOOL! YOUR **STEEL BODY** MAKES YOU THE **WEAKEST** OF THE X-MEN!

AND IN **MY** HANDS, THE MOST **DANGEROUS--TO** YOUR **FRIENDS!**

THIS IS **MAGNIFICENT!** NEVER HAVE I FELT SO **STRONG**, SO SURE OF MY **POWERS!**

IT'S AS IF ALL MY **DEFEATS** HAD **NEVER HAPPENED.** I STAND REBORN, **DEADLIER THAN BEFORE!**

HE'S **TOYING** WITH US! TESTING THE **LIMITS** OF HIS ABILITIES!

VERY WELL, IF HE WANTS A **TEST**, THEN **STORM** WILL GIVE HIM ONE--BY UNLEASHING THE POWER OF A **HURRICANE!**

MOST **IMPRESSIVE**, STORM-- BUT A **WASTED EFFORT**. I CAN STAND **ALL** YOU CAN THROW AT ME AND **MORE!** FOR I AM **MAGNETO**--

--AND **MY** POWER IS **SUPREME!!**

NO! MAGNETO'S SET UP AN **INTERFERENCE FIELD!** HE'S HURLING MY LIGHTNING BOLTS **BACK AT ME!!**

AARRRGH!!

LENIN'S GHOST-- STORM IS IN **AGONY!** I MUST **RETURN** TO THE FIGHT.

BUT... AS MAGNETO **SAID**, MY MUTANT FORM IS **STEEL**, AND THAT PUTS ME AT HIS **MERCY**. IN MY **HUMAN** FORM, I'M SAFE... BUT **USELESS** TO MY FELLOW **X-MEN.**

WHICH LEAVES ME **NO CHOICE**. WHATEVER THE **OUTCOME**...

I MUST FACE MAGNETO, NOT AS **PETER RASPUTIN**--

SKRAK!

BUT AS **COLOSSUS!**

BUMBLING **OAF!** DID YOU THINK I WAS SOME **NOVICE**, TO BE TAKEN SO EASILY **UNAWARES**?!

THOOM!

BAM!

HE... THREW ME OUT OF THE ROOM WITH A GESTURE...

... AS IF I WAS NOTHING TO HIM!

COLOSSUS HITS HARD AND SINKS FAST-- AND EVEN HERE HE DARES NOT SWITCH TO HUMAN FORM. IN THE BITTER COLD WATERS, A NORMAL MAN WOULD FREEZE TO DEATH IN MINUTES...

SPLASH!

MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE LAB, HIS FRIENDS SHOULD BE SO LUCKY...

WRECKAGE-- HEADING STRAIGHT FOR ME!

MUST TELEPORT TO SAFETY, TRY TO GET TO MAGNETO SOME OTHER WAY!

BAMF

NICE TRY, NIGHTCRAWLER-- BUT THE TRICK WON'T WORK AGAINST SOMEONE WHO CAN SENSE DISRUPTIONS ALONG THE MAGNETIC LINES OF FORCE...

...AND, WORSE, SENSE YOUR DESTINATION ALMOST BEFORE YOU DO...

OH, NO!!

CRASH!

YE'RE NOT DONE YET, MAGNETO, NOT SO LONG AS AN X-MAN LIVES!

YOU CANNOT HARM ME, BANSHEE...

...BUT I CAN SMASH YOU WHENEVER I PLEASE!

CAN YE NOW? THAT'S MIGHTY BIG **TALK**, I'M THINKIN'; BUT THEN, TALK IS WHAT YE'RE MOST **FAMOUS** FOR.

COULD IT BE THAT YE'RE **FERGETTIN'** THAT **BANSHEE**--

--IS ONE **X-MAN** YER POWERS **CAN'T AFFECT!**

HIS **SONIC SCREAM**-- IT'S **SHATTERING** THE FLOOR UNDER MY **FEET!**

I'M **FALLING!**

ONLY TO **RISE AGAIN**, USING MY POWERS TO CREATE A BALANCED **ANTI-GRAVITY FIELD** AROUND ME.

YOU SEE, BANSHEE, **I**, TOO, CAN **FLY**-- *

--AND WHILE FLYING, **ATTACK!**

D'YE CALL **THIS** AN ATTACK? SAINTS, MAN, I'VE FACED **FAR WORSE** IN THE **DANGER ROOM.**

IF ONLY **TAUNTS** WOULD WIN THE DAY--! I'VE GOT T'KEEP HIM **OFF-BALANCE** 'TIL THE OTHER X-MEN **RECOVER**-- THEN WE CAN HIT HIM **TOGETHER!**

*AS POLARIS DID IN X-MEN*97 --A.G.

EXCELLENT, BANSHEE! OF **ALL** THE NEW X-MEN...

... **YOU** ARE THE ONLY ONE **WORTH** FIGHTING, EVEN THOUGH YOU FIGHT FOR A **LOST CAUSE.**

DON'T **BET** ON THAT, MISTER!

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WHY NOT, MY FRIEND? I'VE WON!

IT WAS A SIMPLE MATTER TO PULL FERROUS PARTICLES FROM THE WRECKAGE--FROM THE VERY AIR-- AND FUSE THEM AROUND YOUR BODY!

WHERE'S YOUR BRAVADO NOW, BANSHEE--? SEALED WITHIN YOUR FORM-FITTING COFFIN?

YOUR AIR IS GONE AND IN A FEW MOMENTS YOUR LIFE WILL BE GONE AS WELL!

KI-AK!

MAN-FOR-MAN, THEY WERE STRONGER THAN THE OLD X-MEN, YET I'VE BEATEN THEM ALL!

NOT ALL, BUTCHER!

YOU HAVEN'T BEATEN CYCLOPS!

UHH! CAUGHT ME BY SURPRISE! I WAS CARELESS --OVER-CONFIDENT--I GOT MY SHIELDS UP BARELY IN TIME TO DEFLECT HIS BLAST!

ZZA-KT!

HE'S DOWN-- STUNNED--! FOR ALL THE GOOD THAT DOES ME.

I'M HITTING HIM FULL STRENGTH BUT I'M NOT GETTING THROUGH HIS SHIELDS!

THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME LEFT--HE'S ALREADY STARTING TO GATHER HIS WITS, PULL HIMSELF TOGETHER...

...AND WITH ERIC THE RED INVOLVED, I'VE A HUNCH THERE'S MORE AT STAKE HERE THAN JUST THE X-MEN VERSUS MAGNETO!

I MUST BE GETTING OLD! I SHOULD HAVE SEEN THE PATTERN THE MOMENT BANSHEE TOLD ME ERIC WAS BEHIND THE AMBUSH AT CASSIDY KEEP...*

...AND IF THIS PATTERN MEANS WHAT I THINK IT DOES, PROFESSOR XAVIER'S IN A LOT MORE DANGER THAN WE ARE.

...OOOHHH... FOR THIS, I GAVE UP DER JAHRMARKT...?

*X-MEN'S #'S 101-103 --ARCHIE.

NIGHTCRAWLER! FIND THE OTHERS AND HEAD FOR THE LANDING PAD BEHIND THE LAB!

MOVE IT, MISTER! WE'VE NO TIME TO WASTE!

NOW TO FREE BANSHEE.

GOT TO BE CAREFUL EVEN USING MY NARROWEST BEAM, I CAN'T AFFORD ONE FALSE MOVE.

CYCLOPS, NIGHTCRAWLER SAID WE'RE ORDERED TO THE X-PLANE! AREN'T WE ATTACKING MAGNETO?!

NO.

HUH?!? WHAT'RE YE SAYIN' LAD?

AS SOON AS WE FIND COLOSSUS, WE'RE PULLING OUT AND HEADING FOR NEW YORK.

THE BLAZES WE ARE, BUB! THIS FIGHT AIN'T OVER YET!

IT IS AS FAR AS WE'RE CONCERNED!

SEZ WHO!

THE X-MEN TEAM LEADER, BUSTER! NOW DO AS I SAY OR SO HELP ME, I'LL BLAST YOU DOWN AN' CARRY YOU OUT!

OKAY, SUMMERS, THIS ROUND GOES TO YOU--BUT FROM NOW ON, BUB, ALL BETS ARE OFF!

HUH?! OH, GREAT! LOOKS LIKE THAT BUG-EYED BROAD'S* BUSTED LOOSE.

SECURITY ALERT

PRISONER ESCAPED

*LAST SEEN IN X-MEN #96--ARCHIE.

WOLVERINE GAVE IN AWFULLY **EASILY** BACK THERE. I ALMOST **WISH** HE **HAD** TRIED TO **SLUG** THINGS OUT.

X-MEN

PETER! YOU'RE **ALL RIGHT!**

I AM...**ALIVE**, ORORO--AND AS **SICK** OF WATER AS NIGHTCRAWLER. WHEN DO WE **ATTACK** MAGNETO, CYCLOPS?

WE **DON'T.** GET ABOARD EVERYBODY--I'LL **EXPLAIN** EVERYTHING ONCE WE'RE **AIRBORNE.**

AND SO, SOME MINUTES LATER...

THINGS **CLICKED** INTO PLACE WHEN JAMIE TOLD ME **ERIC THE RED** HAD AMBUSHED HIM.

DON'T YOU **SEE?** FIRST ERIC TRIED TO **KILL** THE PROFESSOR AT KENNEDY AIRPORT, THEN HE USED **JUGGERNAUT** TO TRY TO LURE XAVIER TO A **DEATH-TRAP** AT CASSIDY KEEP.

AND NOW, **MAGNETO'S** BACK--**STRONGER** THAN EVER--AND **ALL** THE X-MEN ARE KEPT BUSY **FIGHTING** HIM, LEAVING PROFESSOR XAVIER **UNPROTECTED.**

THAT'S WHY WE'RE HEADING **HOME**, BECAUSE I THINK ERIC'S AFTER THE **PROFESSOR.** AND WE'VE GOT TO BE THERE TO **STOP HIM.**

HEY, SUMMERS, YOU CAN **JUSTIFY** THIS 'TIL THE DAY YOU **DIE**, BUT IT WON'T CHANGE THE **FACT** THAT YOU MADE US **RUN.**

YOU TURNED THE X-MEN INTA **COWARDS,** BUB, AN' THAT'S SOMETHIN' THE WOLVERINE'LL **NEVER FORGIVE!**

THEY'VE-- **GONE!**

I **FOUGHT** THE X-MEN--**BEAT THEM ALL!** THEY'VE **RUN AWAY!**

--LEAVING MAGNETO **TRIUMPHANT!!**

HE LEAVES THEN, NEVER **NOTICING** AS BEHIND HIM, A FINE-AND-PRIVATE **HORROR** STIRS, AND SLOWLY COMES **AWAKE.**

MUTANT X
NO ADMITTANCE
SECURITY ALERT
DANGER
SEAL BROKEN
OXYGEN
SEEPAGE
IN PROGRESS

BUT THAT'S A STORY FOR **ANOTHER TIME...**

SCENE SHIFT: ACROSS THE FACE OF THE UNIVERSE, TO THE COMMAND DECK OF A STARJAMMER...

IT'S STARTING, CH'OD-- THE NINE STARS ARE MOVING INTO ALIGNMENT...

ARE YOU...AFRAID CHRISTOPHER?

CH'OD, IF THE EMPEROR GOES THRU WITH HIS PLAN-- IF HE OPENS THE DIMENSIONAL GATE--

--IT'LL BE THE END OF EVERYTHING.

SHIFT AGAIN: TO A PARABOLIC ORBIT EIGHT THOUSAND MILES ABOVE THE ATLANTIC, AND A STARSHIP WE'VE SEEN BEFORE...

I'VE--I'VE REACHED THE EARTH! BUT MY FUEL IS ALMOST GONE. THERE'S BARELY ENOUGH FOR PLANETFALL.

AND YET, I MUST MAKE IT, IF THE EMPEROR, MY BROTHER'S, MAD PLAN IS TO BE STOPPED.

WAIT!

SENSORS MARKING PHOTON TORPEDOS-- BRACKETING ME!

IT'S AN IMPERIAL CRUISER-- AND IT'S SHOOTING TO KILL!

SHIFT AGAIN: TO AN APARTMENT IN GREENWICH VILLAGE...

MOM!

PROFESSOR XAVIER, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

AND YOU, MR. GREY.

LOOK AT THEM, SO PEACEFUL AS THEY ENJOY THE LAST HOURS LEFT IN THEIR PITIFUL LIVES.

EVEN IF THE X-MEN ARRIVE IN TIME, IT WILL DO THEM NO GOOD. THE DIE IS CAST, MY FINAL PLAYER ABOUT TO MAKE HIS ENTRANCE...

...AND WHEN HE DOES, THE PRINCESS WILL BE MINE. AND XAVIER AND HIS X-MEN WILL BE NO MORE!

NEXT ISSUE: PHOENIX UNLEASHED!